



Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs *Good News*



March 2008

Welcome to Good News. This Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) newsletter highlights the accomplishments and sharing activities at both the local and national levels.

The 2008 DoD/VA Joint Venture Conference, "Oceans of Opportunity" Held March 4-6 in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Representatives from existing and future potential joint venture sharing sites attended the annual conference hosted by Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC) and the VA Pacific Island Health Care System (VAPIHCS). For more details and the presentations, please see the DVPCO website at <http://www.tricare.mil/DVPCO/Hawaii.cfm>.

The goal of the conference was to give attendees a chance to network and share experiences. Each formal, existing joint venture presented an overview of their initiatives that highlighted their unique perspective on the challenges and barriers to sharing. The hosts, TAMC and the VAPIHCS, also gave attendees a tour of their joint facilities and demonstrations of some of their joint projects such as the Warrior Transition Program and the computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing (CAD/CAM) system for orthotics and prosthetics. The CAD/CAM was established with Joint Incentive Fund program money.

The agenda also included presentations on DoD/VA information management/information technology updates, the key elements of joint ventures and a demonstration of the Air Force Data Mart tool.

Some of the lessons learned presented from the individual joint venture sites included:

- Fostering trust and communication is vital to a successful sharing relationship.
 - Joint training and orientation can save both organizations time and money.
 - Customer satisfaction surveys at the clinics can be helpful when planning for the future.
 - In one joint venture site, the VA recently became a TRICARE provider. Scripted responses for Information desk clerks were jointly developed to answer patient questions and ensure consistent distribution of information.
 - Leadership involvement is very important; joint council or regular leadership meetings ensure that sharing remains a priority.
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Defense Department Center of Excellence (DCoE) Addresses Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Psychological Health (PH)

The DoD, with support from the VA, has established a Center of Excellence to address psychological health and traumatic brain injury. The DCoE will advance and disseminate PH/TBI knowledge, enhance clinical and management approaches, and facilitate other vital services to best serve the urgent and enduring needs of warrior families with PH issues and/or TBI. The DCoE will be a premiere center projected to be fully functional by October 2009. Currently in the initial phase, the DCoE is operating in temporary office spaces in Rosslyn, Virginia. For a more detailed story on the DCoE, please see the following link to the Force Health Protection and Readiness Online Magazine at http://fhp.osd.mil/fhp_online/DCoE.jsp

Dr. Stephen Jones Pens Regular DoD/VA Sharing Column in *US Medicine*

Stephen L. Jones, PhD, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs is writing a recurring column on DoD/VA sharing initiatives for *US Medicine*. The current column discusses the Senior Oversight Committee's DoD/VA Data Sharing Work Group. The Data Sharing Work group is co-chaired by Dr. Jones and Dr. Paul Tibbits, VA's Deputy Chief Information Officer for enterprise development. The work group was charged with enabling the Departments to "better share the vast array of beneficiary data, medical records, and other health care information through secure and interoperable information systems, which will allow for a seamless continuum of care". To view current and past columns written by Dr. Jones, please visit: <http://www.usmedicine.com/column.cfm?columnID=267&issueID=108>

National Forum on the Future of Electronic Health Records

In coordination with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs and the U.S. Army's Telemedicine & Advanced Technology Research Center (TATRC), and Georgetown University hosted the National Forum on the Future of the Defense Health Information System. The event was held at the Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, DC, and the Key Bridge Marriott in Arlington, VA, March 26 - 27, 2008. The mission of the Forum was to develop strategic options for DoD to capture the full power of health information technology by convening academic, industry, and government experts together along with the VA. The DoD and VA electronic health records, AHLTA and VistA, along with the data repository systems were discussed in terms of their potential for improving healthcare for beneficiaries and population health for the nation. The Forum will generate a report that will help DoD/VA leadership decide on the future course of these critical programs.

For questions please contact the appropriate point of contact below.

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If you have any good news stories and or accomplishments from your local teams, please send them to Crystal Coleman at crystal.coleman.ctr@tma.osd.mil and your stories may be included in a future issue of the newsletter.

To be added to the distribution list, please email dvpc@tma.osd.mil.